

OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS
PENNINGTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 10TH, 2020 10:00 A.M.

Pursuant to adjournment, the Pennington County Board of Commissioners met at the Justice Center Board Room in Thief River Falls, MN, on Tuesday, November 10th, 2020 at 10:00 a.m. Members Present: Don Jensen, Bruce Lawrence. Members present via Zoom: Darryl Tveitbakk, Neil Peterson, Cody Hempel. Members Absent: None.

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chairman Jensen and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Pennington County SWCD District Manager Bryan Malone presented a wetland delineation regarding the TRF Regional Airport. One wetland was found where the new hangar is expected to be constructed and other possible wetlands exist on the property. The Airport Authority is asking for Board to approve the delineation. Motioned by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Jensen, to approve the wetland delineation as presented. Upon roll call vote: Lawrence – Aye, Jensen – Aye, Tveitbakk – Aye, Peterson – Aye, and Hempel – Aye. Motion carried.

Mr. Malone informed the Board that the CD #96 outlet project south of St. Hilaire is near completion and the project turned out very good.

County Engineer Mike Flaagan discussed the proposed purchase a snowblower attachment for use on their skid steer to aid in clearing roundabouts the Department is responsible for. The following two quotes were received:

Bobcat of Grand Forks	\$6,400.72
Bobcat of Bemidji	\$7,991.85

The snowblower purchase was not budgeted for 2020 but over \$7,000 remains in the current equipment budget. Motioned by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Hempel, to approve the purchase of a Bobcat snowblower attachment from Bobcat of Grand Forks at the quoted price of \$6,400.72. Upon roll call vote: Lawrence – Aye, Jensen – Aye, Tveitbakk – Aye, Peterson – Aye, and Hempel – Aye. Motion carried.

Engineer Flaagan discussed the proposed ditch database software purchase. The software, developed by Houston Engineering, will get all legal ditch documents scanned into a GIS-based database and that is important due to the age and frailty of many ditch records. Total project cost is estimated at \$45,500 and is to be funded with a County contribution of \$22,750 and a matching grant from the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR). The second year will also include a \$4,000 maintenance fee and it will likely take over a year to complete the scanning and organizing of all the ditch records. Motioned by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Lawrence, to approve the purchase of the ditch database software as discussed above at a County cost of \$22,750; with BWSR to provide a matching grant. Upon roll call vote: Lawrence – Aye, Jensen – Aye, Tveitbakk – Aye, Peterson – Aye, and Hempel – Aye. Motion carried.

Mr. Flaagan discussed his two Permanent Part-Time Maintenance Worker positions, which in recent years have been utilized heavily and work 10+ months of each year. He would like to post the two positions as Full-Time Highway Equipment Operators, internally first as required by Union contract. If the two Part-Time Permanent employees apply and are selected for the positions, then the Part-Time Permanent positions subsequently would not be filled. Motioned by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Hempel, to approve posting for two Full-Time Highway Equipment Operator positions

as discussed above. Upon roll call vote: Lawrence – Aye, Jensen – Aye, Tveitbakk – Aye, Peterson – Aye, and Hempel – Aye. Motion carried.

Engineer Flaagan gave an update on the following County projects:

- CD#96: riprap is near completion and they are leveling out the spoil; grass seeding will begin soon.
- Mark Blvd. Bridge: the bridge opened on schedule and all areas to be seeded for 2020 are complete; in the spring of 2021 the final over lay of tar and any painting will be completed.

Mr. Flaagan discussed the ditch petition for JD#13, stating that one mile of work is yet to be completed. A petition has also been received for the CD#73 system in Hickory Twp. Signatures from all the affected landowners have been received but the work will likely be completed in the spring of 2021 due to high water levels in the river this fall.

Emergency Management Director Erik Beitel presented an update to the Board on behalf of the CARES Act Grant Committee. Round 1 of the grants resulting in approximately \$815,000 distributed to businesses, which left approximately \$434,000 for Round 2. Of that amount, \$312,000 was distributed in grants. Mr. Beitel noted that the NW Juvenile Training Center requested a grant distribution of \$21,695.49. CARES funds must be spent no later than December 1st, 2020 or returned to the State shortly thereafter.

Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Tveitbakk, to approve a CARES grant to the NW Juvenile Training Center in the amount of \$21,695.49. Upon roll call vote: Lawrence – Aye, Jensen – Aye, Tveitbakk – Aye, Peterson – Aye, and Hempel – Aye. Motion carried.

Mr. Beitel discussed the \$600,000 in CARES funds retained for County expenses related to COVID-19. Estimated expenses to date include: Inter-County Nursing - \$160,000, Human Services - \$51,590, Auditor's Office - \$45,000, Dept of Motor Vehicle - \$30,818, Highway Dept. - \$7,055, County Board (technology updates) - \$30,000, and LEC - \$21,500 for overtime resulting from COVID-response. The Emergency Management department is \$100,000 over budget due to COVID response work as well. The CARES Grant Committee is scheduled to meet on November 18th, 2020 to discuss any remaining funds.

Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Peterson, to approve all CARES Act county expenses as discussed above. Discussion was held with Commissioners Peterson and Tveitbakk expressing their gratitude to Erik Beitel and Jennifer Herzberg for their work and time spent on the CARES Grant Committee. Upon roll call vote: Lawrence – Aye, Jensen – Aye, Tveitbakk – Aye, Peterson – Aye, and Hempel – Aye. Motion carried.

Mr. Beitel presented a COVID-19 and Committee update, stating that there were 26 new cases over the weekend and 55 active cases in the county. He met with Inter-County Nursing and the Board Chairman with the consensus being that the County needs to help curb the spread of COVID-19. They recommend that all County buildings, including the Government Center, close to the public and be open only by appointment. After discussion, Commissioner Tveitbakk motioned, seconded by Commissioner Peterson, to close the Government Center effective Tuesday, November 17th, 2020 and be open by appointment only. Upon roll call vote: Lawrence – Aye, Jensen – Aye, Tveitbakk – Aye, Peterson – Aye, and Hempel – Aye. Motion carried.

County Sheriff Ray Kuznia met with the Board and recommended the hire of Rhonda Noel as Part-Time Dispatcher/Jailer effective November 30th, 2020. Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Hempel, to approve the hire of Rhonda Noel as Part-Time Dispatcher/Jailer effective November 30th, 2020. Upon roll call vote: Lawrence – Aye, Jensen – Aye, Tveitbakk – Aye, Peterson – Aye, and Hempel – Aye. Motion carried.

Sheriff Kuznia stated that the Sentence to Serve crew is under quarantine until further notice.

County Coordinator notified the Board that the county satisfied the requirements to receive the first half of the 2021 SCORE block grant in the amount of \$34,846. The second half will be paid in April, 2021.

Motioned by Commissioner Hempel, seconded by Commissioner Lawrence, to approve the County Board minutes of October 27th, 2020 as written. Upon roll call vote: Lawrence – Aye, Jensen – Aye, Tveitbakk – Aye, Peterson – Aye, and Hempel – Aye. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Tveitbakk, to approve the Human Services warrants totaling \$134,646.35 and the following Commissioner warrants. Upon roll call vote: Lawrence – Aye, Jensen – Aye, Tveitbakk – Aye, Peterson – Aye, and Hempel – Aye. Motion carried.

County Revenue	\$42,204.35
Road & Bridge	\$76,970.15
Solid Waste Facility	\$ 3,395.75
Justice Center Jail Bond Fund	\$ 475.00
Justice Center Capital Imp Fund	\$ 475.00
Ditch Funds	\$32,279.30

Per diems and meal reimbursements in the amount of \$3,550.00 were also approved.

Commissioner Lawrence discussed the A.V.I. Systems, Inc. proposal for technology updates to the County Board room, including two new video cameras and updated phone service. HDMI cables will also be installed at each Commissioner station so presentations could be made by others present. Commissioner Tveitbakk stated that project materials are in stock and work could start very soon if approved. Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Hempel, to approve the quote of A.V.I. Systems, Inc. in the amount of \$29,312.61 for County Board room technology updates as described above. Upon roll call vote: Lawrence – Aye, Jensen – Aye, Tveitbakk – Aye, Peterson – Aye, and Hempel – Aye. Motion carried.

Commissioner Peterson stated that the Salvation Army sign-up sheet is available for December 12th, 2020 and asked that Commissioners sign up as they are available.

Commissioner Peterson stated that meetings have been held with Enbridge and Line 3 construction in Minnesota may begin in December 2020 if the final permitting is approved.

Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Hempel, to adjourn the County Board meeting to November 24th, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. Upon roll call vote: Lawrence – Aye, Jensen – Aye, Tveitbakk – Aye, Peterson – Aye, and Hempel – Aye. Roll call unanimous. Motion carried.

ATTEST:

Kevin Erickson, County Coordinator
Pennington County

Darryl Tveitbakk, Chairman
Board of Commissioners